

8135.6.30
3

HACKNEY ASSOCIATION.

11

At a Meeting of the COMMITTEE, held on Thursday,
February 6, 1794.

THE Committee of this Association, keeping in view the object for which the Association was at first formed, and anxious to discharge the Trust delegated to them from the General Meeting, think it incumbent upon them to call the Attention of the Public to the present State of the Country, which they conceive to be such as to require the continued Exertion of its Friends, to repel the Enemy that may threaten from without, and to counteract the daring Spirit of those more dangerous Enemies that wish to disturb its domestic Peace.

The happy Effect of collecting the Sentiments and bringing together the Friends of the Constitution, was immediately and sensibly felt throughout the Kingdom. The firm and decided Voice of the People dissipated the Fears with which the Friends of Order and Peace were impressed from the Language of Triumph that had been held by its Enemies and from the visible Effect of their Arts upon the lower Orders of Society. They saw the well affected flock around the Standard of Loyalty with a Zeal that bespoke the deep Impression which they had of the Value of their present Blessings; and the Spirit of Disaffection shrunk from an Appeal which it had itself challenged and provoked, disappointed at the Event so contrary to their boasted Strength. Confidence and Satisfaction every where prevailed; and

A

but

but for the wanton and unprovoked Aggression of France, we had still remained, both at Home and Abroad, in the Enjoyment of the Blessings of Peace. But the Leaders of Disaffection, availing themselves of the necessary Burdens and the common Calamities of War, a War in which we have been embroiled by their own Intrigues, the Necessity and the Consequences of which none can more sincerely lament than ourselves, have begun again to erect the standard of Sedition, and with no common Zeal to undermine the Confidence of the People in their Constitution, their Government and Laws.

The Committee have the fullest Confidence in the Loyalty, the Integrity, the constitutional and moral Principles of their Countrymen of every Description, and as this Association before declared, are still of Opinion, " that the lower Orders of the People, when left to the fair Exercise of their Judgment, and the Impressions of their own Minds, without any of the Arts that are employed to make them believe that they are otherwise, feel that they are *free and happy*;" but, when so much Pains are taken to seduce them from their Allegiance to the Government, and to make them dissatisfied with their Condition, the Committee would be wanting to their own Safety, and to the Ends of their Appointment, if they were not to be watchful of a Spirit so dangerous to the Peace of Society; and to interpose the temperate and faithful Counsels of Experience and sober reflection to check its Progress and counteract its Effects.

The Poor on whom these Delusions are practised, though perfectly peaceable in their Dispositions,
continued

contented, and confident in the Protection and Care of their Superiors, are Men not accustomed to deep Reflection, and therefore not prepared to discern the Fallacies and see through the Designs of those who profess themselves their Friends. They may be deceived by affected Sympathy and Concern for their Condition; and from the Pictures of Hardship and Oppression which are painted for them, may at length be induced to fancy those Oppressions real. They may be tempted by the Prospects which are held forth to them, to envy and disturb the Property of others, without considering that to dispossess another will add nothing to themselves. It becomes therefore the Duty of this Committee, the Duty of all who are Friends to Religion, to Order and Peace, to warn them of their Danger; to confirm them in their Attachment to Government, their just Opinion of the Rights of Property, their Subordination and Duties in their several Relations, as Citizens and Men; to convince them that to disturb the Possession of Property, would cut off the Sources of national Prosperity, and the very Means by which the Peasant and the Manufacturer find Employ; to shew them from the Experience of France, that the Spoils of the Nation fall not to them; compelled by Famine and the Guillotine to fight the Battles of their Leaders, without Advantage to themselves, and without any other Means to earn their Bread.

These are Truths which this Committee owe to themselves, to the Community at large, and to the Poor in particular, to suggest to their sober Reflection, while Passion and Tumult are yet at a Distance, and the calm Voice of Reason can be heard.

As Friends to the Poor, whose Comfort upon all Occasions forms so large a Part in the Concern of their Superiors, it is their Duty to lead them to distinguish between their real Friends, who now afford Employment to the Industrious, Relief to the Needy, and to all, of whatever Condition, the fullest Enjoyment of their Rights, and those pretended Friends, who under the Mask of Advocates for the Poor, would excite them to leave the Labours which afford them the Means of an honest Subsistence; to forfeit the Character, which, however poor, it has always been their Pride to sustain; to become the Tools of desperate and ambitious Leaders, who, when they have served their own Purpose, would become real Tyrants and Oppressors to them.

RESOLVED, That the foregoing Address be printed and dispersed from House to House throughout the Parish, and likewise inserted in the Public Papers.

RESOLVED, That the Committee of the Association meet every Week, or oftener, at the Call of the Chairman, if Occasion shall require.

Signed,

J. WITHERS, Chairman.

